

# SELLING TO THE COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth of Virginia buys almost \$5 billion in goods, services and construction annually. This purchasing represents potential new markets and growth opportunities for Virginia businesses interested in selling their products and services to state government.

To help businesses access these opportunities, the Department of Business Assistance (DBA) has established "Selling To The Commonwealth." This program provides web resources, vendor training, technical assistance, and organized buyer-supplier networking events. "Selling To The Commonwealth" connects buyers and suppliers in an effort to maximize open competition and access to state contracting for Virginia businesses. Related services include:

- "Selling To The Commonwealth" section on the DBA website. Includes links to special announcements, events and related resources.
- Bi-monthly electronic newsletter, "Supplier-Buyer Exchange," with information and updates for buyers and sellers. To add yourself to the email distribution list, email [loretta.vines@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:loretta.vines@dba.virginia.gov).
- Supplier-Buyer networking events. Check the DBA Events calendar for upcoming events. Go to [www.dba.virginia.gov](http://www.dba.virginia.gov), and click "Events," at the top of the home page.
- Supplier technical assistance through DBA's toll free Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) at 1-866-248-8814 or [vbic@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:vbic@dba.virginia.gov).

Virginia's government purchasing, also known as procurement, is conducted on eVA, [www.eva.virginia.gov](http://www.eva.virginia.gov), the state's electronic purchasing system. eVA is managed by the Department of General Services (DGS), the Commonwealth agency which oversees state purchasing and sets related policies. DBA has partnered with DGS to develop educational tools and provide outreach throughout the Commonwealth, helping businesses understand not only how to use the eVA system, but how to market their firms strategically to state government.

## THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

The Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA) is the only state agency devoted solely to the success of all existing Virginia businesses. Our mission is to promote economic growth by helping Virginia businesses prosper. We accomplish our mission through several strategies:

- We provide service and funding for your workforce development and training.
- We offer eight loan programs to meet your credit needs.
- We are the single source for business information and problem solving.

For more information about DBA services, call VBIC at 1-866-248-8814 or contact us by e-mail at [vbic@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:vbic@dba.virginia.gov). Let us help you today.



**Our Business Is Your Success**

## SELLING TO THE COMMONWEALTH

### STEP 1 Learn what the state spends on your product/service so you can determine your market potential.

Find the state's classification codes for your product/service. Go to **[www.eva.state.va.us](http://www.eva.state.va.us)**, click on "NIGP codes" (left margin). Use the online NIGP search tool to identify your NIGP codes. Enter keywords to describe your product/service. For example, keywords for information technology (IT) services might include computer hardware, software, database software, etc. You may have several which apply. Buyers will search for vendors and make purchases using the NIGP codes.

Make note of your NIGP Code(s) for future reference.

Access the eVA "Spend" Report tool. Click on "eVA Home" (left margin), "more Buyer/Vendor Info", scroll to bottom section called Reports - Public, and select this report tool: "eVA Spend For Vendors With NIGP Commodity Code Search".

Enter the "Begin Date" and "End Date" and ignore the remaining optional fields, and click on "Submit".

Evaluate the Vendor "Spend" Report. Click on the "NIGP Code" (blue number) and then click on the "PO Number" (blue number) to view specific details on buying agencies and purchase orders.

Use the "Spend" Report tool frequently to learn about recent activity.

### STEP 2 Evaluate upcoming opportunities and statewide contracts.

Go to the eVA website to search upcoming business opportunities. Click on "Solicitations and Awards", "Public Access", "Business Opportunities" and then click on "Solicitation Search."

Determine if a statewide contract exists for your product/service by visiting the eVA website. Go to "More Buyer/Vendor Info", "Bids/Awards/Auctions/Contracts", search the contracts section (top left); look at VAPP, DPS, VITA & VASCUPP contracts.

### STEP 3 If you are a small, woman or minority owned business (SWAM), obtain state certification to be included in Virginia's initiative to increase access to state contracting for SWAM firms.

Contact the Department of Minority Business Enterprise for information on the SWAM initiative. Call toll free in Virginia 1-800-223-0761 or 804-786-6585 or email [dmbe@dmbe.virginia.gov](mailto:dmbe@dmbe.virginia.gov).

Go to **[www.dmbe.virginia.gov](http://www.dmbe.virginia.gov)**, click on "Customer Services" for state guidelines and applications for certification. There is no charge.

Record your certification number for future use.

### STEP 4 Register on eVA, the state's electronic purchasing system, [www.eva.virginia.gov](http://www.eva.virginia.gov).

Before you begin, you will need:

- Business location
- Federal Tax ID number
- Legal and trading business name
- Duns number. Register online at **[www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com)**. Call toll free at 1-888-814-1435.
- Name and contact info for the person at your company who: will manage your eVA account, receives orders, receives solicitations, receives invoices. These may all be the same person or different people.
- Your NIGP commodity codes (See Step 1 above)

For help with registration, go to **[www.eva.virginia.gov](http://www.eva.virginia.gov)**, click on "Vendor Registration Guidelines."

Follow a series of screens and prompts through the registration process. This will take about two hours. Call the eVA Customer Care hotline at 1-866-289-7367 if you have any problems.

eVA has two service levels. The \$200 level does the work for you, sending you automatic notification of bid opportunities. The \$25 level allows you basic access to the system to research and locate bid opportunities on your own.

**STEP 5 Set up your ARIBA account.**

To complete your supplier registration, you must also establish a separate ARIBA account. This is free. ARIBA is the order notification system. From your established eVA account screen, click on the "ARIBA" button on the upper navigation bar.

**STEP 6 Establish a "Catalog."**

Not the traditional variety. Essentially a spreadsheet of your products/services with corresponding product/service codes.

From the eVA homepage, go to "Vendor Registration Guidelines," click on "Catalog Creation" on the left hand column for steps on this process.

**STEP 7 Maximize your success.**

Use the "Spend" Report tool frequently to track state purchasing activity.

Use eVA's online "Procurement Directory." From the eVA home page, click the "Procurement Directory" quick link in the center of the page for additional buyer contact information.

Visit big spender websites to learn more about their services and additional opportunities.

Visit the websites of DMBE ([www.dmb.virginia.gov](http://www.dmb.virginia.gov)), DBA ([www.dba.virginia.gov](http://www.dba.virginia.gov)), and eVA ([www.eva.virginia.gov](http://www.eva.virginia.gov)) periodically to identify buyer-supplier networking events.

Build relationships with procurement officers through an active, contact program.

**DISCLAIMER:** The personnel of the Virginia Department of Business Assistance are not procurement professionals. We are working to bring state buyers and potential suppliers together.

**SUPPLIER ASSISTANCE RESOURCES**

TOPIC	SOURCE	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE/EMAIL
Certification	Department of Minority Business	1-800-223-0671	<a href="http://www.dmb.virginia.gov">www.dmb.virginia.gov</a>
eVA Registration Assistance	Department of General Services	1-866-289-7367	eVA website: <a href="http://www.eva.virginia.gov">www.eva.virginia.gov</a>  eVA help desk: <a href="mailto:eva-customer-care@dgs.virginia.gov">eva-customer-care@dgs.virginia.gov</a>
Duns Number	Dun & Bradstreet	1-888-814-1435	<a href="http://www.dnb.com">www.dnb.com</a>
Supplier Assistance/Networking	Department of Business Assistance	1-866-248-8814	<a href="mailto:vbic@dba.virginia.gov">vbic@dba.virginia.gov</a>

**STAY CONNECTED TO THE LATEST BUSINESS RESOURCES  
@ [WWW.DBA.VIRGINIA.GOV](http://WWW.DBA.VIRGINIA.GOV)**

**VIRGINIA BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTER**

The Virginia Business Information Center provides individual assistance and answers to specific business questions that cannot be found on our web site.

DBA's Business Resource Center also offers a wealth of information on getting started, incentives, financing, workforce training, and other resources available to help your

## DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

### Have a question?

When entrepreneurs and established businesses run into questions or barriers, they often have to navigate their way through several entities for answers. This is especially true for the state procurement process. DBA's Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) is a toll-free and e-mail service designed to be your one-stop shop for information. It's free and it's fast. Whether your question involves registration requirements at the State Corporation Commission, getting a tax identification number or getting a list of what state agencies buy your product, VBIC can help. Just call VBIC at 1-866-248-8814 or contact us by e-mail at [vbic@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:vbic@dba.virginia.gov).

### Need a loan?

DBA's Financial Services Division administers the programs of the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA). VSBFA is a statewide conduit issuer of industrial development bonds and is the vehicle through which the Department of Business Assistance provides financial assistance to Virginia businesses for the promotion of economic development in the Commonwealth. Our experienced professionals work with businesses, bankers, other state agencies, and economic developers across the state in providing direct funding and credit enhancements through a variety of financing programs for the benefit of eligible new and expanding businesses.

### Adding jobs or retraining your workers?

Workforce Services provides customized recruiting and training services to companies creating new jobs or experiencing technological change. As a business development incentive supporting economic development efforts throughout Virginia since 1965, the program reduces the human resource development costs of new and expanding companies throughout the Commonwealth. Workforce Services offers consulting services, organizational development, electronic media services, and funding. With strong support from the Governor and General Assembly, Workforce Services is completely state-funded, demonstrating Virginia's commitment to enhancing job opportunities for its citizens.

### Want to attend a seminar?

DBA hosts quarterly seminars throughout the Commonwealth for businesses and economic developers. Our seminars include regular updates on state programs and services, as well as information regarding opportunities that impact the business and economic development communities.

### Want to talk to the Small Business Advisory Board member for your district?

The Governor has established a network of local business people through which to receive feedback on all state business programs. To find your Small Business Advisory Board representative, visit [www.dba.virginia.gov/about/boards.asp](http://www.dba.virginia.gov/about/boards.asp).

### Want to host your own supplier training workshop?

If you are a buyer, agency or locality, DBA will bring our "Selling To The Commonwealth" training program to your suppliers or interested small businesses at no charge. For details, contact Deborah Hudson, Procurement Assistance Program Manager, 804-371-8258 or [deborah.hudson@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:deborah.hudson@dba.virginia.gov).

### Need help in another language?

Visit [www.dba.virginia.gov](http://www.dba.virginia.gov) and click on the national flag for Spain, Korea or Vietnam for materials in the native language. In addition, our VBIC counselors have free access to an over-the-phone interpretation service, which offers remote translators for dozens of languages around the world.

**Get your answers at VBIC.**

**THE VIRGINIA BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTER**

**1-866-248-8814 | [vbic@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:vbic@dba.virginia.gov)**